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were sown, and that part of their produce which escaped the birds was drilled thick in February 1827 on a piece of poor gravelly soil. It ripened, and was cut in the second week of August. The plants came up considerably stronger than they had done the year before; and the straw, notwithstanding the dryness of the season, was too coarse for fine plat; but the sample of seed considered as corn was much improved. Hence Mr. G. Aikin infers, that Italian plat wheat, grown in England, will probably, in two or three generations, not be distinguishable from ordinary spring wheat.

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#### No. IV.

### ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE SPECIMENS PRESERVED IN BRINE.

IN the 37th vol. of the Transactions will be found an account, by Mr. Cook, of his method of preserving anatomical preparations in brine. The specimens mentioned in that paper have continued ever since in the Society's possession—it being now thirteen years since they were first put up—and are at present in a state of perfect preservation, having neither lost their colour, nor having become corrugated, and the transparency of the liquor not being at all impaired.

The Secretary of the Society had recourse to the same method, last year, of preserving certain parts of vegetables, chiefly the seed-vessels and parts of fructification. Those which were merely put into a jar of

saturated brine became in the course of the autumn more or less injured by fibrous gelatinous mould growing upon them; but those which were kept in brine, to which more salt than it was capable of dissolving had been added, so as to saturate with salt the juices of the vegetable preparations themselves, have undergone no decomposition or change, except that of having lost their colour.

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## No. V.

## RICE PAPER.

THE so called rice paper of China is imported into this country in considerable quantity, where it is employed as a material for artificial flowers, and for other ornamental purposes. Its common name shews the popular opinion respecting its origin. The subjoined extract from a letter by John Reeves, Esq. of Canton, a member of the Society, shews that the rice paper is not a manufactured article, but an unchanged vegetable stem, cut spirally, and afterwards flattened by pressure.

SIR,

*Canton, March 7, 1826.*

My son will forward to you a sheet of the substance called in England "rice paper," and a piece of the plant (or, I should rather say, of the branch of the plant) from which it is made; but whether this is a tree or shrub, I cannot at present discover, as the person from whom I